



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**

State of Idaho  
Department of Health and Welfare  
Division of Family and Community Services  
Child and Family Services Program

---

Annual Legislative Foster Care Report for SFY 2017

A copy of this report is posted at

<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Children/AbuseNeglect/tabid/74/Default.aspx>

## Contents

Background .....	2
Overview of the Child and Family Services Program .....	2
Receiving Reports of Abuse or Neglect.....	3
Table 1: Referrals, Assessments, and Children Placed in Foster Care by SFY.....	3
Table 2: Referrals by Maltreatment Types.....	4
Table 3: Sources of Maltreatment Referrals.....	4
Assessing Child Safety .....	5
Removal from the Home .....	5
Table 4: Children in Foster Care by SFY.....	6
Table 5: Removal Reasons by SFY.....	7
Table 6: Children Served in Foster Care by SFY.....	7
Table 7: Children Exiting Foster Care in SFY 2017 .....	8
Placements in Foster Care .....	8
Placement Changes in Foster Care .....	8
Table 8: Child Placements on June 30, 2017 .....	10
Table 9: Number of Placement Changes for Children in SFY 2017 .....	10
Table 10: SFY 2017 Placement Change Reasons .....	11
Table 11: SFY 2017 Placement Changes Due to Foster Parent Request .....	11
Provision of Ongoing Case Management Services.....	12
Periodic Court Hearings .....	12
Permanency Decision Making .....	13
Plan for Improvement .....	13
Staffing Capacity.....	14
Foster Parent Transparency and Support.....	14
Consistency and Accountability .....	14
Technology.....	14
Party Status.....	15
Appendix A: Best Practices in Child Welfare .....	16
Appendix B: Resource Parent Survey Summary .....	19
Appendix C: Summary of Required Court Hearings .....	20
Appendix D: Child Welfare Process Flow Chart.....	21

## Background

The Annual Foster Care Report published by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Child and Family Services (CFS) program is intended to provide the Idaho Legislature with information regarding the state's foster care system, as well as the current functioning of the system.

This report is provided by the Child and Family Services program pursuant to Idaho Code, Title 16, Chapter 16, Section 1646, which states:

The state department of health and welfare shall submit an annual report regarding the foster care program to the germane standing committees of the legislature no later than ten (10) days following the start of each regular session. On or before February 15 of each year, the state department of health and welfare shall appear before the germane standing committees to present the report. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, the number of children that are in the department's legal custody pursuant to this chapter, the number of such children who have been placed in foster care, how many times such children have been moved to different foster care homes and the reasons for such moves, best practices in foster care, goals to improve the foster care system in Idaho to ensure best practices are adhered to, a description of progress made with regard to the previous year's goals to improve the foster care system and any other information relating to foster care that the legislature requests. If a member of the legislature requests additional information between the time the report is received by the legislature and the time the department appears to present the report, then the department shall supplement its report to include such additional information.

## Overview of the Child and Family Services Program

Child and Family Services' primary commitment and responsibility is the safety, well-being, and permanency of children who are victims of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment. As an agency, we believe that the best approach to support and protect children is to strengthen families so they can safely parent their children and meet the child's needs for permanency and well-being.

This family-centered approach is reflected in our daily work with families and is supported by federal law, state law, and public policies that place a high priority on family unity, involvement, and privacy.

Child and Family Services program responsibilities fall into four broad areas:

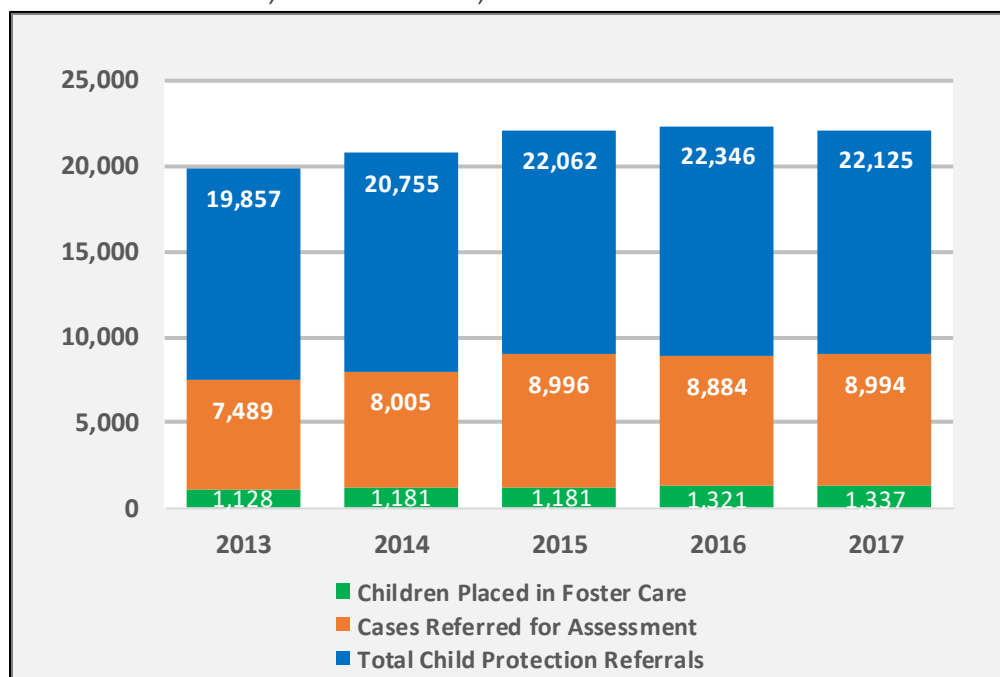
- Receiving reports of abuse or neglect.
- Assessing allegations of abuse and neglect.
- Providing ongoing case management services to children; either in their own homes or in out of home placements.
- Assuring that children have safety and permanency in their own homes or other permanent homes.

## Receiving Reports of Abuse or Neglect

The Child and Family Services program has a Centralized Intake Unit in Boise to which all reports of child abuse or neglect throughout the state are directed. Each report is assessed to determine whether the allegations fall under the statutory definitions of abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Once that determination is made, the report is prioritized for a response. Referrals involving a life-threatening and/or emergency situation require an immediate response. Other reports receive a priority which requires a response within either 24 or 72 hours. On all reports requiring an immediate response, CFS coordinates the response with local law enforcement. The ability to take and respond to child abuse and neglect reports operates 24/7 across the state.

Table 1 (below) contains a breakdown of the referrals received, assessments assigned, and number of children placed in foster care as a result of a removal, and are organized by state fiscal year for the last five years. The table shows 2013-2017 trends in the number of maltreatment reports assessed each year in the state. There has been increase in the number of assessments and referrals completed by CFS from the benchmark of five years ago (2013) to current (2017). In SFY 2017, though the number of referrals decreased slightly from the previous year (2016), the average trend has shown a gradual increase. The number of assessments completed and number of children entering care increased for 2017.

Table 1: Referrals, Assessments, and Children Placed in Foster Care by SFY



During state fiscal year 2017, CFS received a total of 22,125 referrals regarding concerns of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Of these, 8,994 were assigned for a safety assessment, and 1,337 children were placed into foster care.

Table 2: Referrals by Maltreatment Types

Referrals by Type and SFY					
Referral Type	SFY 2013	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016	SFY 2017
Information & Referral	12368	12750	13066	13462	13131
Neglect	4757	5393	6335	6256	6452
Physical Abuse	1995	2084	2209	2080	2001
Sexual Abuse	611	518	431	545	539
Other	126	10	21	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,857</b>	<b>20,755</b>	<b>22,062</b>	<b>22,346</b>	<b>22,125</b>

Table 2 illustrates neglect accounts for the majority of referrals to CFS that meet priority guidelines, and is the most frequent reason children are removed from their homes. Information and Referral is the designation given to referrals containing concerns regarding the welfare of a child that are screened out because they do not meet the definition of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. These referrals may be referred to other entities or agencies.

Cases of neglect may include inadequate supervision, or situations in which the physical environment poses health or safety hazards that directly affect the health and safety of a child, and often involve a parent's unmet mental health or substance use issues.

Table 3: Sources of Maltreatment Referrals

Referrals by Source and SFY										
Referral Source	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
School Personnel	3133	15.8%	3205	15.4%	3484	15.8%	3726	16.7%	3709	16.8%
Parent/Substitute	2807	14.1%	2921	14.1%	3182	14.4%	2839	12.7%	2839	12.8%
Law Enforcement	1945	9.8%	2114	10.2%	2321	10.5%	2294	10.3%	2447	11.1%
Private Agency	2291	11.5%	2429	11.7%	2506	11.4%	2337	10.5%	2367	10.7%
Relative	1964	9.9%	2157	10.4%	2180	9.9%	2477	11.1%	2105	9.5%
Friend/Neighbor	1811	9.1%	1789	8.6%	1669	7.6%	1670	7.5%	1702	7.7%
Hospital	1066	5.4%	1126	5.4%	1155	5.2%	1322	5.9%	1280	5.8%
Child Protection	886	4.5%	927	4.5%	981	4.4%	946	4.2%	1037	4.7%
Anonymous	1003	5.1%	979	4.7%	1108	5.0%	859	3.8%	1009	4.6%
Medical	548	2.8%	695	3.3%	695	3.2%	860	3.8%	934	4.2%
Other	2403	12.1%	2413	11.6%	2781	12.6%	3016	13.5%	2696	12.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19857</b>		<b>20755</b>		<b>22062</b>		<b>22346</b>		<b>22125</b>	

Table 3 identifies the sources of all maltreatment reports received by the Centralized Intake Unit during the past five state fiscal years. School personnel and parents are the primary reporting sources for maltreatment reports.

Idaho Code, Title 16, Chapter 16, Section 1605(1) provides direction regarding mandatory reporting in the state of Idaho for physicians, hospital staff, coroners, schools, daycares, and any other persons having reason to believe a child has been subjected to maltreatment must report to law enforcement or the department. An exception is made for "duly ordained minister of religion." Failure to report as required in this section of Idaho Code is a misdemeanor.

## Assessing Child Safety

A Comprehensive Safety Assessment is completed for all child protection referrals that meet Child and Family Services Priority Response Guidelines for assessment. The primary purpose of the assessment is to assure the child's safety and determine whether the child and family are in need of services to address identified safety threats. The Comprehensive Safety Assessment includes a robust information collection process, and includes a face to face contact and interview with the child. Information is also collected by the social worker through interviews with the parents/caregivers and relevant collateral contacts such as extended family members, law enforcement, school staff, medical professionals, and service providers. The assessment includes application of standardized criteria, along with social worker's critical analysis of the information and conclusion regarding the child's safety.

Upon completion of a Comprehensive Safety Assessment, the agency must determine whether maltreatment has occurred and whether the child is safe or unsafe. Whenever a child is determined to be unsafe the case remains open for services. If the child is determined to be safe the case is closed with no additional intervention.

Whenever possible, efforts are made to safely maintain children in their homes. However, when a safety threat exists, a safety plan must be put into place to manage the child's safety. Actions in a safety plan must address the safety threat to the child and are specific to the family's circumstances. Safety actions might include respite care, supervision and monitoring, resource acquisition, and homemaker services. If the child is assessed to be in immediate danger, law enforcement is charged with the decision for removal. When a child is removed, Child and Family Services makes placement arrangements for the child.

## Removal from the Home

Efforts are made to minimize the trauma of removing a child from the home by an immediate search for any relatives who could serve as a placement resource for the child or children. The Idaho Child Protective Act requires that the department first considers, consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child, placement with a fit and willing relative. If a suitable relative cannot be found, the child is placed in a fictive kin (individuals with a significant relationship with the child) or a non-relative foster care placement.

There are only three methods by which a child can be removed from his/her home in Idaho.

- 1) Law enforcement makes the determination a child is in a dangerous situation and therefore they declare the child to be in imminent danger.
- 2) A petition is filed by with the court by the department indicating it is unsafe for the child to remain in their home. A judge determines whether to enter an Order of Removal.

- 3) A Rule 16 Expansion Order (Rule 16 of the Idaho Juvenile Rules allows for the court to expand a Juvenile Corrections Act proceeding into a Child Protective Act proceeding when the court has reasonable cause to believe that the juvenile living within the state comes within the jurisdiction of the Child Protective Act).

Cases involving the removal of children from their home enter the court system. The Idaho Child Protective Act gives the court responsibility for determining whether the removal of the child is warranted and for making other key decisions as those cases move through the court process (Appendix C).

If a child is under the age of twelve years, the court will appoint a guardian ad litem for the child. For children twelve years and older, the court appoints counsel to represent the child(ren), and in certain circumstances, may also appoint a guardian ad litem for the child(ren).

As shown in Table 1, there were 1,337 children in SFY 2017 that entered foster care as a result of maltreatment or an unstable home environment. Table 4 below indicates the number of children in foster care on the last day of each state fiscal year for the last five years. The point-in-time number of children in foster care in Idaho has ranged from 1,324 to 1,597.

Table 4: Children in Foster Care by SFY

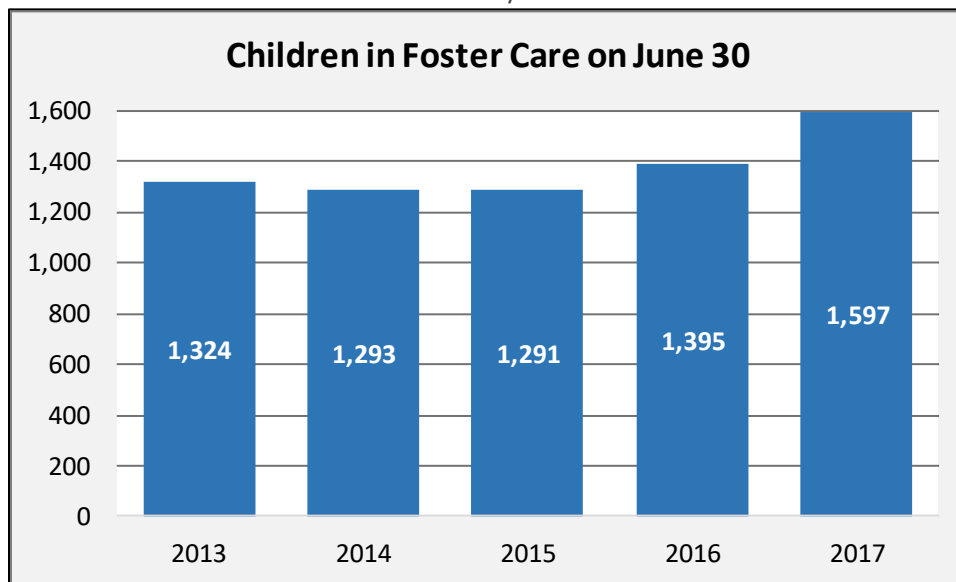


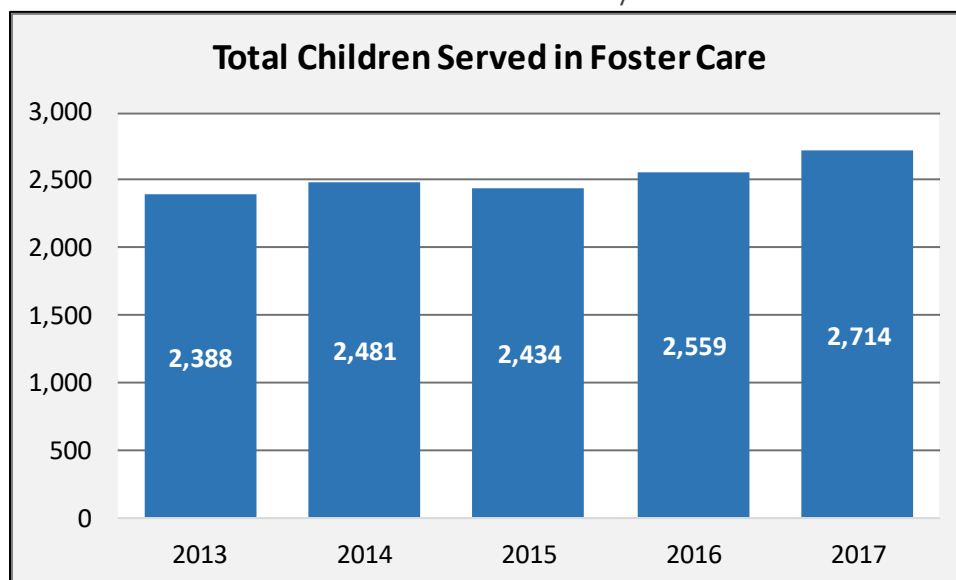
Table 5 includes a breakdown of the removal reasons for children who entered foster care during the last five state fiscal years.

Table 5: Removal Reasons by SFY

Removal Reason Breakdown by SFY										
Removal Reasons	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Neglect	921	81.6%	960	81.3%	947	80.2%	1084	82.1%	1126	84.2%
Physical Abuse	101	9.0%	102	8.6%	163	13.8%	146	11.1%	127	9.5%
Sexual Abuse	41	3.6%	48	4.1%	19	1.6%	37	2.8%	43	3.2%
Abandonment	37	3.3%	43	3.6%	31	2.6%	28	2.1%	13	1.0%
Homeless	18	1.6%	26	2.2%	19	1.6%	22	1.7%	28	2.1%
Voluntary Placement	10	0.9%	2	0.2%	2	0.2%	4	0.3%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1128</b>		<b>1181</b>		<b>1181</b>		<b>1321</b>		<b>1337</b>	

The data shown in Table 6 illustrates the total number of children served through the foster care program during the last five state fiscal years. The number of children served in foster care has increased by 13.6% within the past five years.

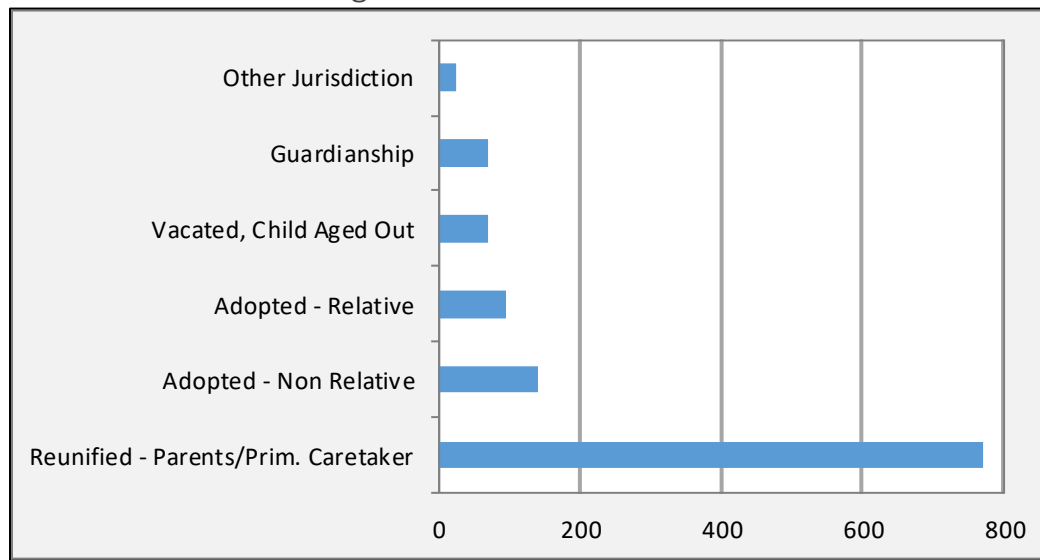
Table 6: Children Served in Foster Care by SFY



During state fiscal year 2017, 1,170 children exited foster care. Of these children, 770 (66%) were reunified with their parents/caregiver. As shown in Table 7, “Other Jurisdiction” could include children placed in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Corrections or another agency/jurisdiction, or the transfer of custody to a child’s tribe.



Table 7: Children Exiting Foster Care in SFY 2017



### Placements in Foster Care

The child's best interests are the primary consideration in all placements. Child and Family Services defines "best interest" as eight factors which identify the current and potential individual needs of a child. The factors are the child's:

- 1) Emotional/behavioral needs.
- 2) Medical/physical needs.
- 3) Educational/developmental needs.
- 4) Cultural/religious needs.
- 5) Trauma history and past experiences.
- 6) Relationships with parents, relatives, siblings, and current caretakers.
- 7) Interests and community connections.
- 8) Family placement preferences.

Child and Family Services workers are mindful of the importance of maintaining relative and sibling connections, and the impact of placement changes on a child's attachment and overall development when making placement recommendations and policy decisions. Therefore, no single best interest factor is considered more or less important than the others. The weight placed on any one factor is highly dependent on the identified needs of a particular child or sibling group.

### Placement Changes in Foster Care

Child and Family Services practice emphasizes placement stability and limiting the number of moves for children in foster care. When children experience placement changes, they can develop distress, loss, and an absence of belonging, all of which can result in feelings of distrust and a fear of forming healthy relationships and attachments with others. A planned placement change is the foreseen placement of a child with a relative, fictive kin, non-relative foster parent,

or group home or residential care. The social worker and provider(s) have made advanced arrangements for the placement of a child. Reasons for planned placement changes include:

- Placement with siblings
- Placement with a relative/fictive kin
- Placement with a non-relative foster family
- Child's treatment needs
- Permanency placement
  - Pre-adoptive placement
  - Guardianship

Planned moves include a transition plan to assist the child with the move. The child's current relationship with the new caregiver, the child's emotional and developmental needs, the proximity of the new placement, and the willingness and ability of the two families to engage in the transition can impact the transition plan.

An unplanned placement change is an unexpected disruption in the child's placement. The following are examples of unplanned placement changes:

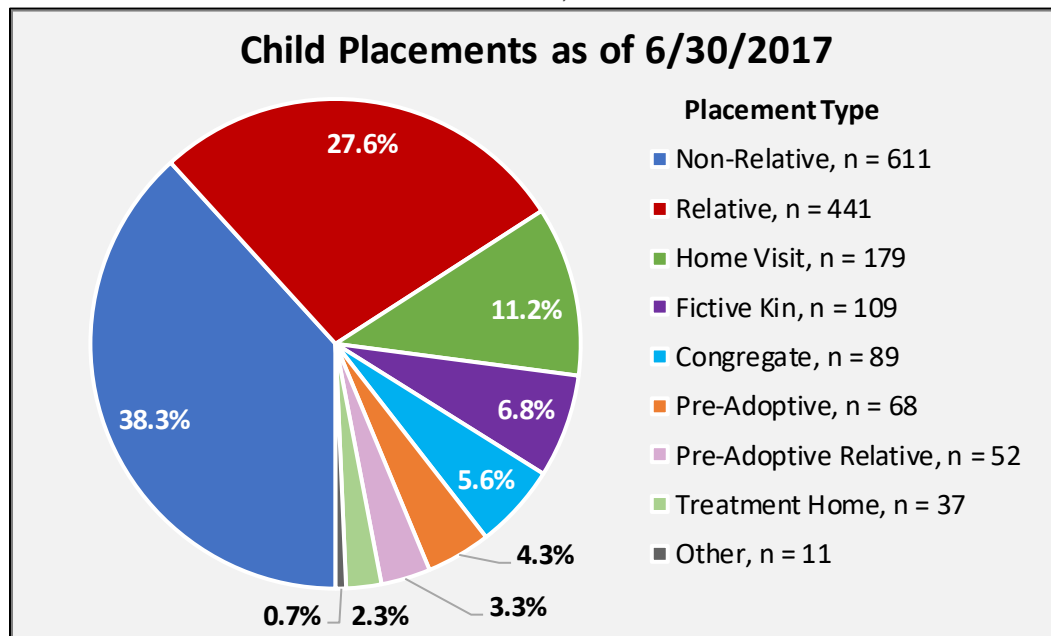
- Foster family's request
- A safety issue in the foster home (allegations of abuse or neglect)
- Child's treatment needs requiring a higher level of care
- Hospitalizations
- Detention

To reduce foster parent requests for placement changes, CFS makes efforts to provide supportive services or other resources to assist foster families to care for children and avoid placement disruptions. Examples of supportive services include: increased respite, foster parent personal counseling, mentoring from an experienced foster parent, and education/training regarding how to meet a child's specialized need. In some instances, foster families may be unable to meet a child's needs due to significant behavioral issues and request that the child be moved.

During the 2016 legislative session changes were made to the Child Protective Act regarding notification of placement changes. In SFY 17, CFS began sending written notification to foster parents regarding placement changes. Child and Family Services is committed to preventing unannounced moves, unless there are safety concerns, and to ensuring clear communications and expectations with foster parents regarding placement changes.

Table 8 (below) contains information regarding the 1,597 children who were in foster care on June 30, 2017 and where they were placed. The majority of those children were in non-relative foster care placements.

Table 8: Child Placements on June 30, 2017



The number of placement changes for children who were served in foster care during SFY 17 is depicted in Table 9 below. As highlighted in the data, over 89% of children had fewer than two (2) placement changes. Of these children more than 64% had only one placement setting therefore experiencing no placement changes while in foster care.

Table 9: Number of Placement Changes for Children in SFY 2017

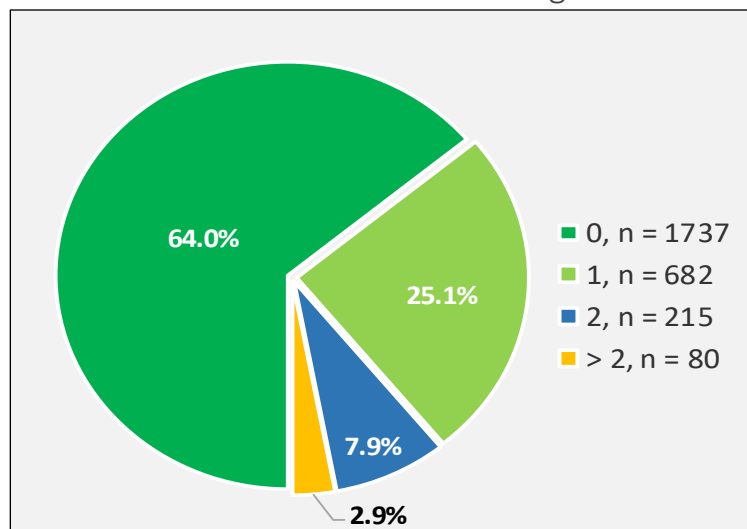


Table 10 provides a breakdown of placement change reasons for children served in foster care during state fiscal year 2017. As identified in the table, nearly 40% of the reasons for placement changes were documented as “Foster Parent Request.” To better identify reasons children experience moves, changes were made to the database system to improve tracking in SFY 17. Of the placements changes for “Alleged Abuse or Neglect,” 30 of the 39 changes were unannounced moves to ensure safety.

Table 10: SFY 2017 Placement Change Reasons

<b>Change Reason</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Foster Parent Request	564	39.9%
Placed with Relative	249	17.6%
Less-restrictive Placement	155	11.0%
Placed with Sibling	75	5.3%
Higher Level of Care	72	5.1%
Fictive Kin Placement	70	5.0%
Non-Safety License Concern	50	3.5%
Higher Level of Care	40	2.8%
Alleged Abuse or Neglect	39	2.8%
Pre-Adoptive Placement	37	2.6%
DJC Custody	31	2.2%
Hospital	26	1.8%
Runaway	3	0.2%
Relative Guardianship	1	0.1%
Other Jurisdiction	1	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1413</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 11 provides the breakdown of placement change sub reasons to further define reasons for changes documented as “Foster Parent Request.”

Table 11: SFY 2017 Placement Changes Due to Foster Parent Request

<b>Foster Parent Request Change Reasons</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Difficulty in Managing Child’s Behaviors	268	48%
Personal Reasons	187	33%
Temporary Placement Only*	109	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Foster parents willing to shelter a child for a brief period such as one night or a weekend.

## Provision of Ongoing Case Management Services

Once a child has been placed in foster care, social workers monitor the family's progress in achieving the objectives spelled out in the service plan, and regularly assess the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child. Case management responsibilities include:

- Making monthly contact with children, parents, and foster families.
- Communicating with service providers to ensure family members are receiving services.
- Transporting or making transportation arrangements for children and their families.
- Arranging and supervising visits between children and parents, and between children and their siblings.
- Working on the alternative plan, which includes ongoing contacts with relatives, and home studies of relatives residing in-state and out-of-state.
- Conducting specialized recruitment to locate an adoptive family for children unable to remain with the foster parents.
- Preparing required court reports and testifying in court hearings.
- Documenting casework activities into CFS's child welfare information system (iCare).

### Periodic Court Hearings

Federal and state law require a court hearing to review the case progress must be held no later than six months from the date of removal. Hearings may be held more frequently at the discretion of the court.

At 12 months from the date of removal, a permanency hearing must be held. At that time, CFS presents its recommendation for permanency. The permanency options include:

- Reunification
- Legal guardianship with a relative or non-relative
- Adoption by a relative or non-relative
- Another planned permanent living arrangement (this is only a permanency option for youth age sixteen (16) years and older)

For every child who has been in out-of-home care for at least 15 of the child's last 22 months, the state is obligated by state and federal law to file a petition to terminate parental rights. If compelling reasons exist for not terminating the parents' rights, those reasons must be approved by the court; otherwise the court will order the filing of a petition for termination of parental rights. Parents may choose to voluntarily terminate their parental rights, or their rights may be removed through an involuntary court process.

## Permanency Decision Making

Child and Family Services is responsible for placing a child in foster care in a safe environment until such time permanency is established. As shown in Table 7, most children in foster care are reunified with their families.

Between the six and twelve-month mark of a child being in care, if the permanency recommendation is other than reunify with parent, CFS implements the Placement Selection process. The goal of the permanency decision making process is to place the child(ren) in a stable environment as quickly as possible to minimize negative impacts. The process considers relatives, fictive kin, and current foster parents who have expressed interest in being permanent placement option and have an approved home study. Pursuant Child and Family Services' Standard, placement selections are made by committees who review the home studies and the child's best interest factors previously noted. When multiple families are being considered for permanency, selection committee participants include: case worker, adoption worker, supervisor, child welfare chief; Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/guardian ad litem; tribal representation (if child is identified as a member of a specific tribe). Also present is a third-party department representative who understands practice but is not familiar with specific case circumstances or a community representative, such as a member of the Citizen Review Panel.

Field Program Managers are responsible for making initial permanent placement recommendations, considering the input of the Permanent Placement Committee. A relative, current foster parent, or fictive kin/kin who was considered by but not selected for a child's permanent placement by the Permanent Placement Committee may request a Permanent Placement Review. This process consists of a thorough review of the initial placement recommendation by a team of individuals from outside of the region where the case is managed and the initial selection occurred. After this review, the Division Administrator makes the final placement recommendation.

Ultimately, determinations relating to where and with whom children are placed are subject to judicial review by the court, and when contested by any party, judicial approval. The court also finalizes all adoptions and guardianships.

## Plan for Improvement

Child and Family Services leadership has taken a critical look at data, processes, and stakeholder feedback. The primary challenges were identified within the following themes:

- Staffing capacity, primarily in the West Hub, impacting timeliness to complete foster parent licensing home studies and safety assessment closure.
- Ensuring transparency with, and support for, our foster parents.
- As noted in the 2017 OPE study, applying consistent decision making and accountability practice in every region and amongst all roles.
- Antiquated technology.
- Child and Family Services workers lack of standing in court given no formal party status.

These challenges have been carefully explored and plans to for improvement in the next year are outlined as follows.

### Staffing Capacity

- The Child and Family Services program submitted a budget recommendation for SFY 19 for funding for seven Child Welfare Social Workers (West Hub – four safety assessors and two licensing workers; North Hub – one safety assessor) and two Child Welfare Supervisors in the West Hub. Authorization of these positions paired with the established training and monitoring plan will positively impact the West Hub’s ability to tend to quality and timely closure of safety assessments. Child and Family Services also anticipates an increased ability for the West Hub to license pending foster families.

### Foster Parent Transparency and Support

- Increasing worker/supervisor/foster parent communication by monitoring the current “Bridging the Gap” model. This model entails supervisors calling one resource parent on each of their workers’ caseloads per month. The outreach provides an opportunity for foster parents to be heard and offers supervisors the opportunity to meet any needs resource parents express. Themes are gathered and will be forwarded to program managers for review and long-term planning.
- Continue the tracking process implemented in SFY 18 around monitoring reasons for child moves and timeliness of foster parent notice. This tracking process leads to improvements in placement move standards and decisions, and ensure adequate and timely communication occurs in all planned moves.
- Form a CFS/foster parent committee that will work to retool foster parent training expectations and secure additional training and support services available statewide.

### Consistency and Accountability

- Child and Family Services is requesting funding for one program manager, two business analysts, and one communications specialist. These positions will enhance the program’s infrastructure to provide accurate data and analysis, streamline processes, and ensure clear communication with both internal and external partners.
- Revamp the purpose and structure of the department’s Child Welfare Steering Committee and revise the purpose statement to clearly define the Committee’s role in reviewing data, constituent feedback, critical incidents, and revising the child welfare system based on review.
- Working with all levels of leadership and outside technical assistance to implement a coaching model that outlines and measures key competencies and expectations for both workers and supervisors to promote consistency.

### Technology

- Child and Family Services has a five-year plan to modernize the current iCARE data system. Changes to the automated system will increase efficiencies, improve data analytics and management, modernize current practice, and improve communication and

case management tools for staff. The department has a budget recommendation for SFY 19 and expects to be finished with the modernization project in SFY 21.

#### Party Status

- Currently, the Child Protective Act does not expressly grant party status to the department in child protection cases. This lack of clarity regarding the department's party status in child protection cases, as well as the current county based system for processing these cases, can lead to inconsistent statewide practice, and in some jurisdictions, critical case information not being shared or considered by the court. In an effort to resolve this long-standing issue, the department will continue to work with the Office of the Attorney General, the Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and other interested stakeholders to develop a solution which would clarify the department's party status in Child Protective Act cases and specify that the Attorney General's Office represents the department in Child Protective Act cases.



## Appendix A: Best Practices in Child Welfare

<b><u>Best Practice/Revision</u></b>	<b><u>Impact</u></b>
Revisions to the <i>Concurrent Planning Standard</i> and <i>Permanent Placement Committee Standard</i> (previously the <i>Permanent Placement Selection Standard</i> ) were completed.	These revisions incorporated changes made during the 2016 Idaho legislative session including placement priorities for children in foster care and youth involvement in permanency planning. Non-relative foster families and kin/fictive kin are also now able to be considered for permanent placement of a child at the same time as the child's relatives. They are also able to request a department review of an initial permanent placement recommendation.
Revisions were made to the <i>Expedited Relative and Fictive Kin Placement Standard</i> and <i>Recruitment and Licensing of Resource Parents Standard</i> .	Provided clarification regarding definitions and the processes.
Revisions to the <i>Sibling Placement Standard</i> , now known as the <i>Placement of Children in Foster Care Standard</i> .	Added placement preferences for children placed in foster care, and information regarding managing placement changes and transitions.
Revisions have been made to the Resource Parent/Agency Problem Resolution Process.	Clarified the definition of grievance and retaliation, specified timeframes outlining the length of time to achieve a resolution or advance to the next phase, and expanded the inclusion of an outside supportive individual to participate in meetings/discussions with the resource family.
Revisions to the <i>Well-Being Standard</i> were finalized.	<p>Now standard reflects the implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), as well as consistency with federal expectations of timeframes around well-being requirements</p> <p>To support the implementation of ESSA, CFS has been closely collaborating with the State department of Education and local education agencies throughout the state. Training, guidance, and supports have been developed and provided to further promote educational stability for children in foster care.</p>

<b><u>Best Practice/Revision</u></b>	<b><u>Impact</u></b>
Revisions to the <i>Use and Monitoring of Psychotropic Medications Standard</i> are in process.	These revisions will incorporate updates to practice and expectations of social workers.
Revisions to the <i>Standard for Working with Older Youth</i> were made to reflect changes made during the 2017 legislative session.	Youth are now eligible for Independent Living (IL) services in Idaho when they have been in an eligible foster care placement for 90 days after their fourteenth birthday. Previous eligibility requirements indicated that a youth needed to be in an eligible placement for 90 days after the youth's fifteenth birthday.
Revisions were made to both the process and the application for tribes in Idaho to access IL services from the Department.	Clarified process as to how tribal youth access IL services.
A Chafee Foster Care Independence Program work group comprised of Department IL staff as well as community partners and Independent Living services contractors was developed.	Assessed services across the state and develop statewide definitions and consistency regarding core Independent Living services that should be available to all youth regardless of the region/county/city that serves them.
The <i>Working with Older Youth Academy</i> curriculum was updated.	Academy includes both hands-on, in classroom and foundational online learning. The new curriculum was also developed to incorporate youth perspective and to be utilized in conjunction with youth trainers. Curriculum will be rolled out beginning in calendar year 2018.
Child and Family Services continues to progress on the statewide implementation of the Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool.	The trauma-informed tool is utilized to gather assessment information, guide service planning, and to initiate appropriate service referrals based on individualized needs and strengths.
A statewide Parent Home Study and Parent Home Study Guide and Unlicensed Relative Home Study and Relative Home Study Guide were created and implemented.	Ensures statewide consistency in the completion of comprehensive home study assessments for incoming Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) placement requests from other states.
The Annual Leadership Summit was held in July 2017 for all child welfare supervisors, chiefs, program specialists, and managers.	The summit focused on how organizational climate and culture cultivate effective child welfare practice.

<b><u>Best Practice/Revision</u></b>	<b><u>Impact</u></b>
<p>A newly revised Leadership Academy was offered the week of May 1-5, 2017. This revised academy included 2.5 days of <i>Family Centered Practice for Supervisors: What's Good for Families is Good for Workers</i>, and 2.5 days of <i>Strengths-Based Supervision for Supervisors</i>.</p>	<p>New supervisors have foundational training as to best supervisorial practices.</p>
<p>Results from a survey of adoptive parents receiving Idaho adoption assistance benefits were compiled.</p>	<p>The results reflected an appreciation of adoption assistance benefits and a need for post-adoption services to assist in meeting the special needs of their adopted children. The information is being used in developing a plan to ensure quality customer service and support to families willing to provide permanency for children in foster care.</p>

## Appendix B: Resource Parent Survey Summary

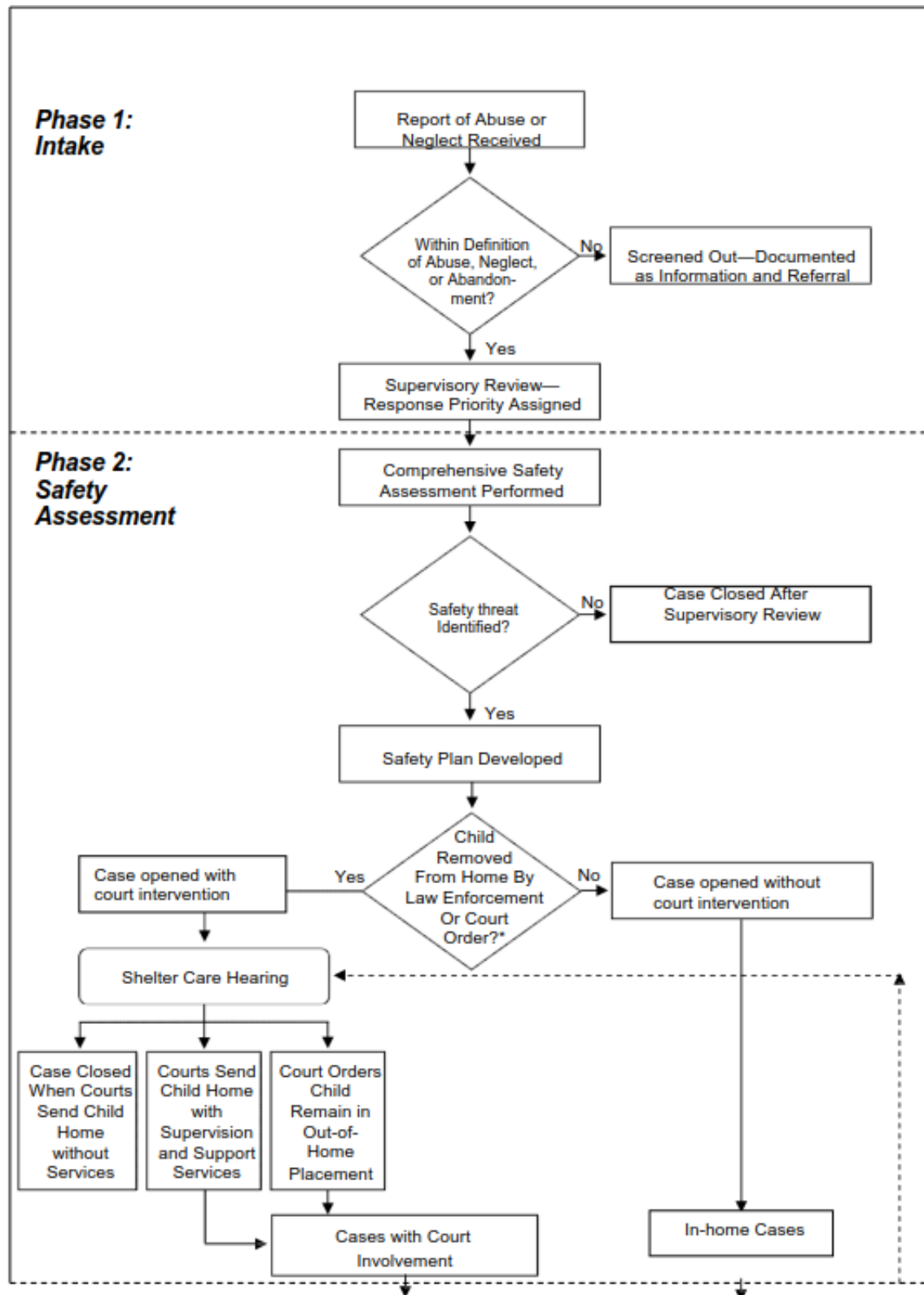
<p>In November 2016, the updated Foster/ Adoptive Parent Annual Survey was sent to over 1,500 Idaho resource parents across the state via email or postal mail. A total of 415 resource parents responded to the survey (28% response rate), doubling our response rate from 2015.</p>	<p>Highlights of response data:</p> <p>76% of respondents indicated their phone calls, emails, and texts were always or usually answered within two business days.</p> <p>60-70% of respondents agreed they received sufficient information about the child and the circumstances surrounding the child's placement in foster care.</p> <p>69% of respondents reported they always or usually receive advance notice of court hearings and reviews concerning the child(ren) in their home.</p> <p>66% of respondents rated the overall support they received as good or very good.</p> <p>68% of respondents reported they feel they are a valued participant on the decision-making team that supports the child(ren) placed in their homes.</p> <p>75% of respondents would be very likely or somewhat likely to recommend foster parenting to a friend or family member.</p>
--	--

## Appendix C: Summary of Required Court Hearings

<b><u>Hearing</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose</u></b>	<b><u>Time Requirement</u></b>
Shelter Care Hearing	To determine if the removal of a child from his/her home is warranted. The court must find that it is contrary to the welfare of the child to remain in his/her home. The court must also determine that reasonable efforts have been made to prevent removal unless there are aggravating circumstances, such as the parent abandoning the child, committing murder, or committing felony assault against a child.	Within 48 hours of removal.
Adjudicatory Hearing	Following investigation of referrals, to determine whether the evidence indicates abuse or neglect has occurred and to determine whether the child should remain in foster care.	Within 30 days of the petition requesting removal.
Plan Review	To review the service plan developed by the Department. The court can approve, reject, or modify the plan.	Within 60 days of removal or 30 days of the court order taking custody of the child, whichever comes first.
Review Hearings	To review child protection cases while the child remains in the Department's legal custody.	Held at six (6) month intervals.
Permanency Hearing	To review the permanency plan developed by the Department, which contains its final recommendation regarding reunification and permanent placement of the child.	Twelve (12) months after removal or the court accepts jurisdiction for a case, whichever comes first.
Guardianship Hearing	To appoint a guardian for the child if the child's permanency plan is guardianship.	Thirteen (13) months after removal, unless an extension is approved by the court.
Termination Hearing	To determine if termination of parental rights is in the child's best interests. The court must find that reasonable efforts to achieve reunification have been made, but these efforts have failed.	To be initiated when a child has been in out-of-home care more than 15 of the last 22 months.
Adoption Finalization	To approve the adoption of a child. The child remains in Department custody and review hearings continue until the adoption is finalized.	Within 24 months of removal.

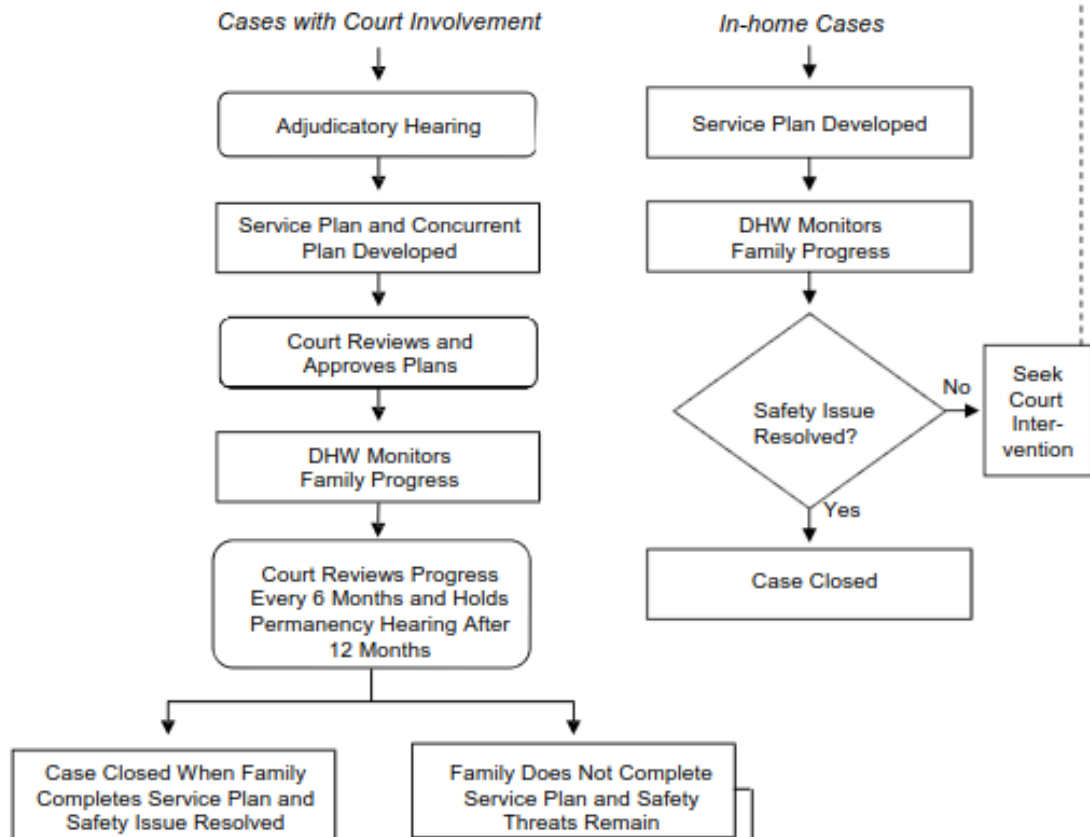
\*The hearings listed above are those which are required to be held by state and federal law. Additional hearings are often held at the discretion of the court to assess case status and progress.

## Appendix D: Child Welfare Process Flow Chart



\* The majority of children enter foster care via a declaration of imminent danger by law enforcement. Less frequently, the Department may file a petition with the court requesting removal. In this circumstance, a judge makes a determination to sign an order for removal.

### Phase 3: Case Management



### Phase 4: Termination/Permanency

